

James C. Wilkins to Andrew Jackson, May 13, 1817, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

CAPTAIN JAMES C. WILKINS TO JACKSON.1

1 Wilkins signed himself "Late Cap. Natchez Vol. Rifle Corps". Appended to his letter is the following certificate, signed by Nich. C. Hall: "I was a member of the Natchez Vol: Rifle Corps, commanded by J. C. Wilkins, and was a witness to the flight of our Troops on the right Bank of the River, on the morning of the Eighth January 1815, and altho' I have no personal knowledge that they were of the Kentucky line, yet it was so reported and believed in Camp."

New Orleans, May 13, 1817.

Dear Sir, I have the Honor of Recv your letter of the 29 ulto, which had been transmitted to me at this place.

On the morning of the 8th January the Company I commanded were ordered to the Right Bank of the River, to Reinforce Genl. Morgan's position which had been forced by the Enemy. After we had effected a landing, and during our progress to Scene of action, we encountered our Troops, flying in Squad, and evidently laboring under the greatest Panic. Whether the Troops were a part of the Kentucky Division, I am unable to Speak with positiveness, yet I am certain they were so denominated in Camp. After I had Reported the arrival of the Corps to Genl. Morgan, and While a portion was working to organize the army broken and dispirited by Recent defeat, I heard Col Davis answer Genl. Morgan, that his Command were Dispursed, and that he was not able to mustre more than twenty or thirty Men, at that Moment. During our March to join Genl. Morgan, we met officers Riding

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with great Speed in pursuit of the flying Soldiers and Striving without Success to Rally and bring them back to the position which had been taken up by Genl. Morgan.

I should Regret, if any thing I may have stated, Would be misconstrued into an opinion, derogatory of the Military character of the State of Kentucky. I have always contended that there was no Difference in Militias, when Commanded by officers, who profess the difficult Talent, of inspiring them with Zeal and Confidences.

With High Respect Your obd. servt.